


## M E M O

Date: March 5, 2009  
To: Executive Board  
From: Henry L. Gardner   
Executive Director  
Subject: **Executive Director's Report**

### **State Budget Approval**

Now that the State has a budget for the rest of FY 2009-10 and FY 2010-11, the freeze imposed on State funded projects should soon be lifted. This will relieve the cash flow pressure on the Estuary Project and the Bay Trail Project, both of which depend largely upon State grants and contracts. Still at issue is whether or not the State will release funding for the period the freeze was in place. So far, the answer appears to be no. This will result in a reduction of overall funding. We were successful in finding alternative funding for projects not subject to the freeze which allowed us to maintain full staffing in these two project areas during the freeze. The rest of ABAG's programs and projects were not affected by the freeze.

### **Blueprint Grant**

MTC and ABAG have again been successful in competing for continuing funding for our Blueprint Plan, known as FOCUS. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has awarded MTC/ABAG \$640,000 out of a total of \$5 million dollars statewide for the next round of funding. Eighteen regions compete for these grants. These funds come from the Federal Highway Administration and this is the fourth year that funding has been available. As welcome as these grants are, they are limited in that the total amount each year (\$5 million) has not been increased since the inception of the program. Furthermore, there is no assurance that these funds will continue to be available in the future.

### **ABAG PLAN**

ABAG PLAN recovered over \$380,000 on behalf of Property Program members for reimbursement of past losses. Money will likely be used to broaden coverage and reduce premiums for FY 2009-10. Liability Program members have received over \$440,000 in grants so far this fiscal year for risk management programs and services that otherwise may have been cut during these tough economic times. Members will consider increasing grants for next fiscal year to prevent cuts to critical training and risk management programs.

### **ABAG POWER**

Over the last three years, ABAG Energy Watch has helped identify and implement energy-efficiency projects for 70 local government agencies and special districts throughout the Bay Area. Ranging from small towns to large cities and counties,

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participants have achieved energy efficiency, as well as significant energy cost savings, by reducing energy consumption in local government facilities, and have received assistance with community level energy policy development. More than 275 energy-efficiency projects are expected to be completed by the end of the first quarter of 2009, saving over 21,000,000 kilowatt-hours in electric power and over 478,000 therms of natural gas. The ABAG Energy Watch Program will conclude this spring 2009, but ABAG members will still be able to access services for energy efficiency through new sub-regional Energy Watch Programs and with the launching of the new "Green Communities" effort.

### **FOCUS Forum**

FOCUS Forum continues its series of monthly meetings with focused discussions and guest speakers that provide opportunities to learn more about specific issues concerning the creation of complete communities near transit in urbanized areas. Upcoming meetings will address "Cities and Schools—Best Practices for Urban Areas" on April 9; "Development with Diversity" on June 25; and Health in Urban Areas" on July 9. Meetings are from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Bayside Rooms, Port of San Francisco, Pier 1, The Embarcadero, San Francisco. For more information, please contact JoAnna Bullock at JoAnnaB@abag.ca.gov or (510) 464-7968.

### **Earthquake and Hazards Program**

ABAG's Earthquake and Hazards Program is completing a list of potential soft-story multifamily residential buildings in the City of Oakland which was selected as a "pilot" for the inventory process because of its interest in using such a list to develop strategies to encourage retrofitting of these buildings. While the list is not yet final, the "draft" list estimates that there are 942 buildings that are "potential" soft-story buildings containing 12,991 housing units. ABAG's Earthquake and Hazards Outreach Committee, chaired by Oakland City Councilmember Nancy Nadel, is now in the process of looking at the options for soft-story hazard mitigation in Oakland and other high-risk cities. For example, the Outreach Committee is reviewing the recommendations of San Francisco's Community Action Plan for Seismic Safety (CAPSS) project. If your jurisdiction is interested in participating as this process moves forward, contact Jeanne Perkins at jeannep@abag.ca.gov.

October marks the 20th anniversary of the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. ABAG is assisting the Bay Area Earthquake Alliance in compiling a list of events that are being planned by cities and counties commemorating the Loma Prieta earthquake. Please contact Jeanne Perkins at jeannep@abag.ca.gov with your events, and go directly to the Alliance Web Site at <http://bayquakealliance.org/> to join our group.

### **ABAG Financial Services**

Financings delivered by ABAG and its affiliated entities since my last report include:

- \$6,200,000 in Bank Secured Variable Rate Demand Revenue Bonds on behalf of **Alameda County** for the Ecole Bilingue de Berkeley to purchase, rehabilitate and construct school facilities; and,
- \$60,000,000 in Bank Secured Variable Rate Revenue Bonds on behalf of **San Diego County** to provide permanent capital financing for a new hospital in the Sharp Healthcare System.